

North Folk Bank, the McGraw Hill Companies, the New York Yankees, ABC, and the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey. Secretary of State Colin Powell, a graduate of Morris High, presented the members of the Morris Robotics Team a gold coin in honor of the team's achievements over the past three years.

Mr. Speaker, the Morris Robotics Team has mentored students at I.S. 162 since they decided to join in the FIRST Lego League competition and looked for support. Morris High School students have been working at the school since October 2002, and thanks to this, on February 8, 2003, members of the Morris Robotics Team and I.S. 162 students competed for and won the 2003 First Lego Competition Director's Award. The Director's Award is given to the team that is best in five key elements of the Technical and Team Performance Awards.

Morris High School also competed the weekend of March 8 with 60 other high schools around the country in competition for mentoring/coaching a winning middle school team. The Morris Robotics Team is the only New York City high school that has traveled to Richmond, Virginia, to compete in the NASA/Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) South-Atlantic Regional FIRST Robotics Competition on March 6–8. On Friday, at the conclusion of the first day of competition, Morris High School won the Imagery Award, which celebrates attractiveness in engineering and outstanding visual aesthetic integration of the robot and the team appearance. At the end of the competition on Saturday, March 9, the Morris Robotics Team received the top trophy as the South Atlantic FIRST Robotics Winner. The Morris Team has the opportunity to be a dual regional winner when they compete in the New York City High School Robotics Regionals on March 21 and 22.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to recognize the members of the team: Sherelle Benjamin, Malik Shuford, Sashanna Saunchess, Angel Alvarado, Walson Ty, Makeba Higgins, Tyrue Green, Jose Vanderpool, Mark Banks, Isaias Guity, Alison Green, Cruz Mayelyn De Los Santos, Uche Nwosu, Daniel Nwosu and Edwin Ruiz.

This team has demonstrated that they have the ability and the desire to be assets and role models in our community. We are proud of their accomplishments and I am confident they will continue to be successful. They are terrific examples for students throughout our schools and communities.

Again, I congratulate them and I wish them the best of luck in their future activities and

competitions. They are our champions and our future leaders!

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to and congratulating the Morris High School Robotics Team in the South Bronx.

**HELP EFFICIENT, ACCESSIBLE,
LOW-COST, TIMELY HEALTHCARE
(HEALTH) ACT OF 2003**

SPEECH OF

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2003

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support for the bill before the House, H.R. 5, the Help Efficient, Accessible, Low-Cost, Timely Healthcare (HEALTH) Act of 2003. I believe it is important that Congress act to address the medical malpractice crisis that has begun to threaten access to care around the country.

I will vote for this legislation because I view our current medical malpractice system as in a state of crisis, and I think it is important to begin the legislative process needed to preserve access to care for all Americans. I do, however, believe that that the bill could be improved and I encourage our colleagues in the Senate to be open to constructive suggestions that address legitimate concerns from members on both sides of the aisle. For example, I am concerned that the \$250,000 cap on non-economic damages in this bill is too low. As a former state insurance commissioner, I recognize that caps can be useful to providing predictability and stability in the insurance market. But I also believe that a higher cap on such damages would be more appropriate without undermining predictability or significantly raising premiums.

I think it is important that we recognize that there are other dynamics of the medical malpractice crisis that need to be considered, and we should view this reform proposal as only one part of a comprehensive solution. Just this week, as my colleagues know, the House passed legislation that I cosponsored dealing with medical errors reporting and reduction, creating what is intended to be a "feedback loop" for health care systems. I hope my colleagues will share my view that once the House passes this medical malpractice reform bill, it will mark only the beginning of a dialogue to help stabilize our health care system

while protecting appropriate consumer remedies. To be certain, this is a difficult balance to strike within a complex set of issues, and I urge my House and Senate colleagues alike to remain open to bipartisan efforts to improve this legislation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 17, 2003

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to travel to Washington for the legislative week beginning on March 10, 2003 as a result of injuries sustained in a car accident. I have included a letter from my physician stating that his medical judgment was that I not drive or fly extensively for the week after the accident. Had I been present in Washington for votes, it was my intention to vote in the following ways:

Rollcall No. 50—"aye."
Rollcall No. 51—"aye."
Rollcall No. 52—"aye."
Rollcall No. 53—"aye."
Rollcall No. 54—"aye."
Rollcall No. 55—"aye."
Rollcall No. 56—"aye."
Rollcall No. 57—"aye."
Rollcall No. 58—"aye."
Rollcall No. 59—"aye."
Rollcall No. 60—"aye."
Rollcall No. 61—"aye."
Rollcall No. 62—"aye."
Rollcall No. 63—"no."
Rollcall No. 64—"no."

CARLE TRAUMA CENTER,
Urbana, IL, March 11, 2003.

Re Mr. Tim Johnson.

To Whom It May Concern:

U.S. Representative Tim Johnson was hospitalized at Carle Foundation Hospital under my care the week of March 9th due to trauma suffered in a car accident. It was my medical judgment that he not fly or drive extensively for at least a week after the trauma. It would be dangerous and potentially life-threatening if he were to do so given the trauma to his lungs and rib cage, and potential damage to lungs and/or heart.

Sincerely,

URETZ J. OLIPHANT, MD, FACS,
Director, Trauma Services.